

Following a review of intelligence and an assessment of threats by the intelligence community, the Department of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Homeland Security Council, has made the decision to lower the threat advisory level to an elevated risk of terrorist attack, or "yellow" level.

In conjunction with this action, we plan to stand down from Operation LIBERTY SHIELD over the next several days; however, we must maintain vigilance that is in keeping with the elevated risk that exists.

Operation LIBERTY SHIELD provided an opportunity to apply a focused National level effort aimed at deterring terrorists from attacking our homeland. The operation was conducted in conjunction with the heightened threat level of Orange that provided an even greater level of security. We have all learned from LIBERTY SHIELD. For this reason, the Secretary of Homeland Security has tasked his agencies and requested other Federal agencies to closely examine protective measures that were employed during Operation LIBERTY SHIELD and to assess their applicability in a modified form under the Homeland Security Advisory System's Threat Level Yellow. Further guidance will be provided to state and local government officials on this matter shortly. For example, visible presence is a viable form of deterrence. Under Threat Level Yellow, the use of random or rolling patrol operations can be effective in signaling to terrorists that their chances of succeeding are minimal and terrorist operations may be disrupted and prevented.

During the LIBERTY SHIELD operation, the Department of Homeland Security, working closely with the FBI and the CIA, evaluated threats from all sources and provided threat information to state and local governments, private sector owners and operators, and the public. While the effectiveness of LIBERTY SHIELD is difficult to measure, we do know that visible presence is an effective deterrent and actions taken during LIBERTY SHIELD may have disrupted and prevented terrorist activities.

Yellow is still a state of elevated alert and we need to continue our vigilance in order to ensure the security of our homeland. Of note, April 19 marks the anniversary of both the Waco fire and the Oklahoma City bombing and is a date significant to the agenda of antigovernment individuals. Our ability to assess threats requires timely information. Continued reporting from State/local and private sectors is critical in creating a national threat profile. The Department of Homeland Security encourages reporting of suspicious activities during all threat levels.